



NDOC Newsletter

Nevada Department of Corrections

Director Jackie Crawford

Assistant Director of Operations - Glen Whorton
Assistant Director of Industrial Programs - Howard Skolnik
Assistant Director of Support Services - Darrel Rexwinkel

Leading Nevada Corrections into the Future

The NDOC

Newsletter

- Do you have a name for the NDOC Newsletter?
- Do you have a submission for the NDOC newsletter ?

All names, submissions and suggestions for articles will be considered.

Please email the editor Rob Rovere at:

rrovere@ndoc.state.nv.us

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October 2003

Governor Kenny Guinn Visits HDSP & SDCC

Governor Praises Corrections Officers and Staff

Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn accompanied by local officials, business and community leaders visited HDSP and SDCC during a rare open house event held Monday, October 6, 2003 at the facilities located outside Las Vegas near Indian Springs.

The tour guests were transported by the newest NDOC Bus from the Grant Sawyer building in Las Vegas to SDCC and HDSP. The Governor was escorted by Director Jackie Crawford, Assistant Director Glen Whorton, Assistant Director Howard Skolnik, Warden James Schomig, together with CO's and Staff of HDSP and SDCC.

During the visit the Governor and a group of approximately 35 persons representing local community leaders, state and county officials were able to see the Department



HDSP reception for the Governor on October 6, 2003

(left to right) HDSP Associate Warden, Charles McBurney, NDOC Director Jackie Crawford, Governor Kenny Guinn, HDSP Warden James Schomig

"Our Corrections officers and staff did an exceptional job today of representing the best of the Nevada Department of Corrections", said an enthusiastic

Director Crawford. "We are so proud of our Officers and Staff for their great work not only at HDSP and SDCC, but throughout the Department".

Shift Bids by Seniority Effective January 2004

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NDOC responds to CO's requests. Revised Administrative Regulation 301 will start new bidding process in November of 2003

Director Jackie Crawford of the Nevada Department of Corrections has signed off on newly revised AR 301 which allows shift bids by seniority. "This is a great step for our Corrections Officers and Senior CO's who have faithfully served the people of the State of Nevada for many years." said Director Crawford. "We are pleased to have worked with SNEA, NCA and individual CO's who have cooperated in the development of this newly revised Administrative Regulation."

Assistant Director of Operations Glen Whorton praised the efforts of the Administrative Regulation Review Board in finishing the AR before the start of the new year. "Together with the Board, the many Corrections Officers who contributed their input, NDOC was able to review and sign-off on AR 301 before the holidays as a present to our Corrections Officers and their families."

AR 301 allows Officers to bid by seniority where there are more than 20 Officers on the legislative approved staffing chart. Other highlights include: Annual November shift bids and bids for regular RDO's, 30 day preview of shifts to be bid, proxy bidding if on leave, Shift bids for filling vacancies, and annual vacation periods.



ISBC SRT Officer Brian Ward and Transportation CO's Joe Kinsley and Tom Karnofel from Carson City at SDCC during the Governor's Visit.



HDSP Corrections Officer Kim Landin, and Larr Green SNCC Sr. Corrections Officer, who represent NCA, flank Director Crawford,



Officers at SDCC listen to Director Crawford praise SDCC and HDSP

6 Questions for the Director Director Jackie Crawford was brought to NDOC by Governor Kenny Guinn as the first female Director in Nevada's history. Director Crawford is nationally recognized for her work in Nevada, Arizona and with the American Corrections Association.

As a former CO what is the toughest part of working in prison?

The day to day grind, being there under the stress of the environment.. Being watchful of inmate behaviors and making sure inmates, your fellow CO's and staff are safe.

However it was never boring and every day was a new challenge.

Why are there so many inmate programs?

It's all about better management of 10,000 plus inmates and security. Idleness among inmates breeds contempt, assaults on staff rise when inmates are not occupied. Better a safe staff than less programs. Isn't it better to go home to your family safe than be attacked in the yard by an inmate with nothing better to do?

What are the chances of receiving a pay increase next year in the legislature?

We are conducting a salary survey using county and city pay rates as a base to prepare for the next legislative session.

When you started in corrections what was the general attitude about female CO's?

We did not belong here, we would get hurt. A lot of women have paved the way for current female CO's who now enjoy equal pay and better treatment than we received.

Will we build more prisons in Nevada?

Only as needed. We do not want to build ourselves into the poorhouse and have no budget for staff and salaries. The Governor recognizes our needs and supports the Department.

What do you view as your major achievement thus far as NDOC Director?

The entire administrative staff at NDOC has worked hard to bring our CO's and staff a better department.

The first legislative session in which I was involved we brought back a large pay increase for our CO's. That was the number one issue that year and we delivered that pay raise with the support of Governor Guinn. We are now providing new radios and batteries under a well designed program which will allow us to replace that equipment when it is necessary. This has been a major issue and we are responding to the needs of our CO's.

There is a private scholarship of \$80,000 dollars available to CO's and staff for education, 30 NDOC employees enrolled in school under this program.

There are the protective vests, the emergency response teams, the employee committees which contribute to the development of new policies and revised AR's. The twelve hour shifts and seniority based bidding came out of that employee committee system, NDOC responded to the needs of our officers and their families.

There are training centers for CO's to have online training. Our training programs and the training areas we have are second to none in this state.

Given our resources, we will continue to upgrade our training, assess pay and benefit levels, develop better communication with our CO's and staff, and do all we possibly can do to make this department one of the best in the country.

Corrections Officers and Staff are the heart and soul of our institutions and their well-being is never far from my mind.

Who would you like to ask questions of and what would those questions be? Email to Rob Rovere, rrovere@ndoc.state.nv.us. We reserve the right to edit all questions and answers based on security.

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Rethinking the Key Thrown Away

By PAUL von ZIELBAUER

Last week, John Ashcroft, the tough-on-crime attorney general, gave federal prosecutors orders to all but eliminate plea bargaining with defendants and, almost without exception, prosecute the most serious charges they can prove. Meanwhile, from Connecticut to California, legislatures and governors are, with a few exceptions, eagerly finding new ways to reduce, rethink or eliminate prison sentences for crimes within their jurisdictions.

The result is a somewhat contradictory national crime-fighting agenda: as the Ashcroft Justice Department demands the harshest prison terms and goes out of its way to track federal judges who do not give them, state lawmakers are openly advocating less time for the same crime and giving judges more discretion in choosing punishments.

"To just say everybody should go to jail all the time is unfair and very simplistic," said Michael P. Lawlor, a Connecticut state representative and co-chairman of the General Assembly's Judiciary Committee, which is considering several bills that offer drug-addicted and mentally ill criminals alternatives to incarceration.

That states and the executive branch in Washington differ on policy is not surprising. But experts say it is eye-opening how divergent each side views their common mission of cutting crime. "The states and the federal government are moving in quite different directions," said Frank Bowman, a former federal prosecutor who is a professor at the Indiana University School of Law.

At the Justice Department, he said, "you have a group of people in control who really are true believers in incarceration. They have almost religious zeal to see that people get sentenced to prison for a long time." At the same time, Professor Bowman added, in dozens of states with the toughest laws on nonviolent crime, including New York, Texas and California, "people are scratching their heads and saying, 'You know, incarcerating people for that long doesn't work.' "

The differences are partly a matter of ideology, politics and, in the case of nearly every state government, money.

"States just don't have the money, so there is this incredible willingness from folks on both sides of the aisle to come together and talk about these things," said Daniel F. Wilhelm, director of the state sentencing and corrections program at the Vera Institute of Justice, a Manhattan-based nonprofit group.

Mr. Ashcroft has often said that taking criminals "off the street and keeping them off the street reduces crime." To Representative Lawlor, a moderate Democrat, and to lawmakers from both political parties across the nation, that is a simplistic conclusion, one their states can no longer afford to make. "We just want to be a little more careful about who we send to jail," Mr. Lawlor said. "Kind of the opposite of what the attorney general is saying."

The federal prison system now comprises more than 172,000 inmates, a larger and faster growing prison population than any single state's, including California and Texas, which each hold roughly 163,000 prisoners. In a speech on Monday announcing his new directive to prosecutors, Mr. Ashcroft said it was aimed at putting away "child predators, criminal bosses, drug kingpins and violent gun criminals."



SDCC SRT members CO's James Jones, and James Scally show their presence on the SDCC Yard during the Governor's tour.



NDOC Corrections Officers standby at HDSP to assist the Director and Governor on the tour October 6th

William Kuloloia, Joe Vallejo, Veronica Damon, Lt. Isidro Baca, Sgt. Robin Kiser, Lt. Ollie Powe, and SC/O Steve Statler.



HDSP Honor Guard represented CO's and Staff.

Sgt. Bruce Stroud, C/O Jackson, C/O Mclean, C/O Jeremy Bean, SC/O Ritz, and C/O Ronald Oliver.



Correctional Officer Trainees stand the yard at HDSP during the Governor's visit.



Amy Wright chief of Nevada Probation and Parole speaks with NDOC Director Jackie Crawford

It may do that, critics of the new policy say, but it will also send away far more young, first-time, nonviolent offenders — criminals for whom a reasonable hope of rehabilitation still exists. Moreover, more than half of the federal inmates — 55 percent — were convicted of relatively unspectacular drug-related crimes, according to the federal Bureau of Prisons.

Inmates convicted of weapons or immigration charges make up 22 percent of federal inmates. Murderers and sex offenders, by contrast, make up only 5 percent, and major drug traffickers represent less than 1 percent of prisoners in the federal system.

Thus, despite Mr. Ashcroft's tough words, many criminologists say his new directive will not significantly change the number of years the worst criminals spend in prison.

"It's not as if those types of people aren't serving a huge amount of time already," said Michael P. Jacobson, a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Mr. Jacobson, a former New York City correction commissioner, is also a consultant to lawmakers in several states where interest in reducing or eliminating prison sentences has flourished as a way to not only trim insatiable prison budgets, but also to cut recidivism.

James Austin, director of George Washington University's Institute on Crime, Justice and Corrections, said officials in many states had been persuaded that harsh sentencing laws do not work. "There's a growing recognition that they may have gone too far," he said.

Last year, California, where the Department of Corrections consumes about 6 percent of the state's trillion-dollar budget, began allowing first- and second-time nonviolent drug offenders to choose treatment programs instead of prison time. Budget officials predict the change will cut the state's prison population by 36,000, or 22 percent, and save \$250 million over three to four years.

This year, several large states en-

acted laws to reduce or do away with prison sentences for certain nonviolent criminals, according to a study of prison-related legislation by the Vera Institute.

The Legislature in Texas, a state long proud of its hard-knuckle approach to crime, passed a law requiring treatment instead of incarceration for drug offenders. Another law requires courts to sentence certain first-time drug offenders to probation, saving an estimated \$30 million over five years.

In Kansas, a new law requires first- and second-time drug offenders to be sent to counseling instead of prison, at about one-fifth the cost. Three new laws in Michigan eliminated most of the state's mandatory minimum sentences for drug crimes and give judges new discretion to vary sentences based on factors other than the weight of the drug seized, as previous laws required.

Despite widespread public support and a near certain cost savings, New York's governor, George E. Pataki, a Republican, and Democratic legislative leaders failed — again — to agree on how to reduce some of the harshest drug-crime sentencing laws in the nation. But several other state legislatures passed laws with varying degrees of flexibility and creativity, the Vera Institute found.

A new law in Indiana, for example, gives judges discretion to suspend sentences of offenders if their drug or alcohol abuse, or mental illness, played a role in their crime. In Missouri, a new law broadens the number of nonviolent offenders who are eligible to serve their remaining prison terms through home detention.

North Carolina created a law this year that allows the Department of Correction to transfer convicts who are not United States citizens to prisons in their home countries, saving about \$3.5 million a year. While saving money has been a driving force behind the wave of new state laws, experts said, falling crime rates in most states

have made them politically feasible.

Last year, the nation's violent crime rate reached its lowest level — 23 victims people per 1,000 people age 12 or older — since 1973, when the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics began recording it. During the same period, property crimes have dropped by 70 percent, to 159 crimes per 1,000 households, another record low.

"Politicians are saying, 'I'm not going to lose anything,' " said Bob Gangi, executive director of the Correction Association of New York, referring to the new laws reducing criminal sentences. "It's not going to win me votes, like positions on abortion or education would, but it's not going to lose me votes."

There has been no corresponding change of heart in the Bush

administration. At conferences and engagements across the country, Mr. Ashcroft has made it clear, indeed, that tailoring prison sentences, regardless of the circumstances or criminal involved, will not be tolerated.

"I believe that when a predator commits a crime, he should do the time," Mr. Ashcroft often says in his prepared speeches.

To make sure federal jurists get the point, Mr. Ashcroft ordered prosecutors last month to begin notifying his office whenever a judge hands down a sentence more lenient than the range set by federal sentencing guidelines.

Another obvious difference in the disparity among federal and state sentencing guidelines is the cost. Most states are required by law to balance their annual budgets; the federal government is not. Unlike prison budgets in most large states, the expenditure for the federal Bureau of Prisons amounts to a microscopic fraction of overall spending.



The Governor gets ambushed in the Yard at HDSP by the news media.

Two television channels and one southern Nevada newspaper covered the event.



The legislative tour treks the yard at SDCC.



SNEA representative and HDSP Facilities supervisor Scott Alexander, HDSP facility manager Dennis Cotter and Assistant Director Glen Whorton, enjoy the lunch provided at HDSP during the tour.

Firm - Fair - Consistent

The Mission of the Nevada Department of Corrections

It is the Mission of the Department to:

Provide professional staff to protect the community through
safe, humane, and efficient confinement of offenders.

Provide opportunities for offenders
to successfully reenter the community through:

Education

Training

Treatment

Work

Spiritual Development.

Be sensitive to the rights and needs of victims.



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